IMPROVEMENTS IN LIGHTHOUSES.—My attention has been called to the insertion in your last number of a request made to you by Mr. R. Rettie, in reference to my suggested improvement to the ordinary light-house. Mr. Rettie states that the "telegraphic improvements attributed to Mr. Wells are *his*, and not Mr. Wells's." It is hardly worth my while, perhaps, to contradict Mr. Rettie, inasmuch as the *best* verification of the falsity of his assertion that the suggestion is *his*, is contained in a printed statement of the merits of my ideas on this very important subject, *drawn up by Mr. Rettie himself*, printed copies of which were amply distributed by him at the *soirées* of the late Marquis of Northampton, *to whom Mr. Rettie introduced me as the originator of the very plan and model there and then exhibited.* After your perusal of the statement, I am sure I need not add one word in support of *my claim* as the original propounder; and I think you will do me the justice, after such perusal, unequivocally to deny the *truth* of Mr. Rettie's most unaccountable (I may say impudent) application to himself of that which he himself emphatically acknowledges to be my own.—GEORGE WELLS.

THE TIDAL STATUE, CHELMSFORD.—A correspondent asks us to say, in justice to the inhabitants,—that the conduit has been altogether removed from its old position, and the statue rests upon the *pedestal provided* by Mr. Baily, the sculptor: the base has been extended about a foot, and at the four sides are lions' heads, which pour forth a supply of water into as many basins; but this arrangement is made of so subordinate a character that, as Mr. Baily stated on his visit here the other day, it is neither offensive nor ridiculous.

STREET LIGHTS.—In street lamps of the common construction there is a great waste of light. I would suggest that the tops or roofs of these lamps, which often measure one-third or one-fourth of the entire surface, be made of tin, to be kept bright in the inner side, or of glass, silvered over like looking-glasses, so as to reflect the light downward. I agree with your correspondent from Devizes, that street lights should just be above the reach of umbrellas, and no higher.—X. Y. Z.

MODEL LODGING HOUSES.—It is a grievous pity that great men should at times be troubled with such small ideas in this age of progress. I have just now seen a page of your journal containing an elevation of Prince Albert's Model Lodging-house for the Poor. Will you allow me to inform his Royal Highness and my Lord Shaftesbury, that two of the best MODEL lodging-houses for the poor that I am acquainted with are Windsor Castle, and Wimborne St. Giles, Lord Shaftesbury's own residence; and as a workshop for either operative, mechanic, or agriculturist, I can conceive nothing more appropriate than the Crystal Palace, properly fitted up under the direction of such men as Paxton, Fox, Cubitt, Brunel, and yourself?—CHARLES H. CREWE, the Hayes, near Derby.

ELECTRO-TELEGRAPHIC PROGRESS.—Dr. Stelnheil, director of the Austrian telegraphic lines, has discovered, it is said, the means, by a simple apparatus, of causing the electric fluid to travel any distance, however great, and that as quickly, and as safely, as the shortest distances. Being adapted to existing lines, all may be united, and despatches forwarded from one extremity to the other without any interruption. If not by the direct line, they can just as quickly by any other line, even the most round-about. Thus a despatch might be forwarded from London to Paris, *vid* Trieste or St. Petersburg, as quickly as by Calais. Dr. Steinheil keeps secret for the present the nature of his discovery.——At a telegraphic congress held lately at Vienna, it was agreed by the deputies from various lines that the same alphabet should be used through all the German-Austrian telegraphic union. There will be a general treasury for international despatches; the receipts to be divided according to the length of wire used.——The Dover and Calais submarine telegraph is now fairly at work, since 13th inst., when the one o'clock prices of the French funds at Paris were posted, through its means, at the London Stock-Exchange, by twenty minutes to three.——New wires have been of late in course of laying along Fleet-street and the Strand. They are cased in gutta percha, and laid in zinc tubes beneath the outer edge of the pavement, from half-a-foot to a foot below the surface.——The rates of charge on our English lines are at length in course of reduction towards a more moderate and practicable standard, which, however, they have not yet altogether reached.——Upwards of 200 miles of insulated wire have been laid down by the *Magnetic* Telegraph Company upon a portion of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway; and the new line of telegraph between Manchester and Liverpool, belonging to this company, will be opened in a week or two.

LIAS LIMESTONES.—Our articles on the mineral products in the Great Exhibition have brought us a number of letters. Not one of the persons whose materials were mentioned has thought it necessary to thank us for doing so, but several who are not mentioned abuse us for the omission, and the solicitors of some have gravely forwarded us notices of actions at law for injuries sustained. The first we can readily excuse, and the second we can afford to laugh at. Amongst the letters on the subject, not abusive—for of these we take no notice—is one from Mr. Greaves, of the Lias Lime Works. He says, "Last week, when writing upon mineral products in the Great Exhibition under the head of 'Lias Limestones,' Lyme Regis, and many other places, are named, but not a word of Warwickshire, where more stone is produced, and larger quarries worked, than in any other part of the kingdom, and from whence most of the important works that have been constructed in and near London during the last six or seven years have been supplied. With respect to the Crystal Palace, I exhibited more limestone, flagging, lithographic stones, samples of floors, &c, than any one else, and I imagine there is more flagging stone produced from the Warwickshire quarries than any other part, as it is generally used for hall, kitchen, and barn floors in the midland counties."

RAILWAY TRAFFIC.—The *Brighton Gazette* states:—"It is a fact worthy of recording, that the Brighton Railway Company's receipts for traffic on their several lines (73¾ miles) are greater for its length than any other line in the United Kingdom. The traffic per mile during the past week amounted to 63*l.*" Our contemporary is in error. The receipts last week upon the London and North-Western Railway were 79*l.* per mile, and on the Great Western 65*l.* per mile. The increase since the 1st July last upon the London and North-Western line has been 209,243*l.* over the corresponding period of 1850; the increase upon the Great Western, 134,547*l.*; upon the South-Western, 73,374*l.*; upon the South-Eastern, 66,836*l.*; and upon the Brighton, 27,376*l.*

LABOURERS' COTTAGES.—The Duke of Northumberland, says the *Mark-lane Express*, has given orders for the construction of no less than 1,000 new labourers' dwellings; and due attention will, no doubt, be paid to the sanitary principles of their construction, in which builders have hitherto shown themselves grossly ignorant.

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.—A practical experiment is at length, it appears, about to be made with this light, which is to be fitted up in one of the tunnels on the Lancashire and Yorkshire line of railway, designedly for permanent use.

CAMBRIDGE ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—The second general meeting of this society was held on 13th inst., the Rev. T. S. Woollaston, one of the vice-presidents, in the chair. The secretary, Mr. G. A. Lowndes, of Trinity College, brought the subject of the change of architectural nomenclature into seven periods, as proposed by Mr. Sharpe, M.A., of St. John's College, an honorary member of the society, before the society, which produced an animated discussion on the subject, in which Mr. Woollaston, Mr. Luard, and Mr. Freshfield took an active part.—*Cambridge Chronicle.*

NAILS IN BIRMINGHAM.—The establishment we saw, the other day, at Birmingham, made twenty tons of nails per week, of all sizes together; that is, about four tons of the largest size commonly made—six inches long—and sixteen tons of other sizes, descending to the little tack which measures only three-sixteenths of an inch. No one can tell precisely how many are made in the kingdom, because there are numerous small manufacturers in the inland towns, whose sales are not ascertainable. But it is supposed that Birmingham may supply 200 tons a week; and the whole kingdom, perhaps, 500 tons. Now let the imagination follow this;—let us think of a handful of tacks, or the household box of nails, and follow these up to the pound, the hundred weight, and the twenty hundredweights that make a ton, and think of five hundred of these tons, as a weekly supply; and we shall be full of wonder as to what becomes of such heaps of unaccountable masses of nails.—*Household Words.*

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